

Nevada Daily
Mail
Nevada, MO
Circ. 2500
From Page:
1
12/26/2008
14245



61 Online giving a popular year-end choice

Nevada Daily Mail

There's still time, advocates of non-profit organizations say, to make a year-end donation eligible for a tax deduction, and giving via the Internet has been growing in popularity.

Digital donations have risen sharply in recent years, becoming one of the fastest growing online trends in the United States. Last year, online charitable giving totaled approximately \$6.8 billion, according to the ePhilanthropy Foundation.

Tragedies have set a new bar in digital philanthropy. In 1999, the American Red Cross raised \$2.7 million online, a record at the time for online gifts. However, a sharp increase in online donations has occurred throughout the past decade, especially following disasters. In fact, the American Red Cross estimates that \$265 million was raised online in just two weeks following Hurricane Katrina.

"Some people argue that technology isolates people, creating a digital divide between those who have proper access and those who don't," said Lonnie Schaal, technical support analyst at Socket, a

Missouri-based telephone and Internet provider, and a frequent volunteer. "Yet, few people realize how the Internet has played a major role in allowing people to get in touch with those in need."

Digital philanthropy allows donors the opportunity to connect directly with people around the world in ways that were not feasible before due to the high cost of recruiting donors around the world. With advanced technology, digital donations can now be solicited at an exceptionally low cost worldwide.

"Younger donors prefer donating online because of the convenience," said Schaal. "Older donors appreciate the accountability and the ability to analyze online annual reports and financial statements of the charity they are supporting."

Some of the most credible and free Web sites for researching charities include www.guidestar.org, www.charitynavigator.org, and www.charitywatch.org.

These Web sites gather and publicize information about nonprofit organizations to evaluate their efficiency, accountability and ability to sustain programs over time.

Web sites such as www.globalgiving.com allow potential donors to browse through more than 500 different project profiles with detailed progress reports.

All projects are screened to ensure they meet IRS guidelines for international grant making and that they comply with new national guidelines for anti-terrorism.

(See GIVING, Page 3)





Nevada Daily
Mail
Nevada,MO
Circ. 2500
From Page:
3
12/26/2008
14245



Giving

■ Many Web sites offer safe options for charitable donations.

From Page 1

On a smaller level, www.donorschoose.org allows potential donors to browse through one-page grant essays submitted by public school

teachers across the country.

In the proposal, teachers outline materials needed in the classroom and how much money is necessary to fund the project.

Once the project is complete, students show their gratitude by writing thank-you notes to their benefactors.

"It's amazing how many good causes there are to give to online at our very fingertips," said Schaal.